

A LETTER
FROM AMSTERDAM
TO A FRIEND IN PARIS.

Polit. Pamphlet, vol. 1, 169.
Steriles dominantur aeneas.

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I never complied more chearfully with your commands then at present, since I have the occasiō to discharge a debt I owe to the Christian World. You desire to be satisfied concerning this so much talked of Plott in England which is the only subject of all Discourses and as it hath alarmed all the King of Great Brittain's Kingdomes and Dominions so it hath struck with astonishment the greatest part of Europe. Iudicious People find them selves in great perplexity, on the one side they cannot comprehend how so many Religious Persons whose education hath been in the spirit of Meeknesse & Humility, so many men of Quality, who have given such unquestionable Proofs of their Loyalty, and exposed both Fortunes & lives to maintain the life and Autonomy of the late & present Kings of England, so many of all degrees and conditions hitherto reputed honest in their Actions and sincere in their words, should upon a suddaine bee engaged in a Diabolical and Damnable Conspiracy to take away the life of the King & subvert the Government. On the other side, if there bee noe plott how comes a whole Kingdom to be so imposed upon as to believe it, And then to use such severities and Rigours far different from

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the usual temper of the Nation? This is the Riddle which you desire to be solved: I shall doe it in brief and plainly; for Truth never appears better then in downright and vnartificiall expressions. Sr, I can assure you there is no such thing as a Plott of the Catholicks; no designe against his sacred Majesties Person, Government, or Laws of the Land: If any particuler Person has transgressed let him suffer for it, *Anima quæ peccaverit ipsa morietur*. This is the desire of all good Christians; and I am credibly informd that the Generall of the Iesuits, vpon the first bruit of this Conspiracy, should say of his Religious, *si se misuerint istiusmodi Rebus, dignum luant supplicium*. But as a bare Accusation without manifest proofs is deem'd a mere Calumny, so a bare deniall is a slender Apology, to take of a prejudicate opinion: I shall therefore make it out with vndeniable Reasons. You have rightly described the parties accused; I shall decypher the Accusers and then appeal to your Iudgment whether they bee Persons that deserve any Credit.

Sergeant Mainard, in Mr. Colmans Triall pag. 8. saith Mr. Oates was the first man that wee heare of, that discovered this Treason: Hee was the single man, that discovered so many Active Agents in so great a Treason. It is worth the pains to informe you what this Oates is. His Father in his younger dayes was a devoute silk weaver, but in the late Rebellion found it more for his advantage to turn an Anabaptistcally Preacher, After the Returne of his Majesty, hee became a Minister and was beneficed in or near Hastings, at present he is an old fornicator in Kingstreet southampton Buildings. Hee trained vp his son Titus to the Pulpit, and having him selfe procured a better living resigned that to his son; but whether he was baptized or no is a great question; though the son saith he was christened at seventeen yeares of Age, yet I presume it was done after the Anabaptistcally forme. His debaucheries are notoriously knowne in and about Hastings; I shall not defile my paper with them: yet I must not omitt to tell you how hee accused an Innocent man of Sodomie, but was convicted of Perjury (The Conviction stands vpon Record) and was clapt in Prison, but hee brake it. Sometime After hee was embarked for Tangers, hee fell to his old Tricks of Sodomy in the ship and was taken *in flagranti*, to escape hanging, according to his demerit, he adventured drowning and stole away narrowly to shore in the Cockboat: But this, you will say, is not to the purpose; his Majesties Indulgence has granted him a plenary impunitie; & his infamous life does not de grade him from a capacity, to bear wittnesse for the King; nay his Patrons allow this, and like him the better; the more wicked he is, the fitter instrument to make discoveries of wicked designs: for who more proper so *unkennell a Fox*

then.

then the Terrier, that is part of him? And as to his legall conviction of Perjury recorded *in perpetuum rei memoriam*, tho it disables him from making a Legall Testimony, yet it implyes only a Presumption, *semel malus semper presumitur malus*; And not a necessity of allwayes lying from that time forward; and who can Tell but heemay speake truth at present! be it so; yet it must bee granted that the Infamy of the Accuser takes off from his Credit with the Iudicious, and obligeth a consciencious Person to waue his Iudgment, untill better proofs bee produced; as also that every one must bee looked vpon as Innocent by the eye of the Law, if there bee no allegation against him, besides the testimony of a Person perjured vpon Record. Iustice then and Charity (That is the law of God and man) maintaine a man in possession of his Innocency, vntill he is either outed by the evidence of his owne Acts, or ejected by a Legall formality. This Argument must bee allowed to conclude thus far; and I pretend no more. This you say is too general, and not to your entire satisfaction; I will therefore descend to the particulars of the Accusation, and make out with evidence that they are groundlesse and false.

On sonday 29. September 1678. stil: v. his Majestye being present in Councell, Titus Oates deposed vpon oath, how hee had been employed by the Iesuits to Treat with Don Iohn of Austria. and that hee did actually treat with him at Madrid about this Conspiracy; and mentioned severall other passages happened at Madrid. Hee repeats also his being at Madrid July 77. in his depositions taken by order of the house of Commons.

How wel he knew Don Iohn, may be seen by the description hee made of his Person to his Majesty and Councell, I report mysele to those that were present; That he never was at Madrid is thus made out; Hee was not acquainted with the Iesuits before April 1677. This he cannot deny. His great friend and acquaintance that first introduced him can testifie as much. Towards the end of April hee was on shipboard in the downs, as appears by his letter dated there. As to his arrivall in spaine his stay there and returne for England I shall give you the Depositions of severall Persons vpon oath before a publick Notary.

Don Duarte sal, Michael Hore, and Iohn Grace Merchants of Bilbao deposed how they knew very wel Titus Ambrosius alias Oats an Englishman, that hee landed at Bilbao on the 16. of May 1677. stilonovo brought from London in the ship called the Merchant of Biscay Lucas Roach Master; hee stayd there 10. dayes or there abouts; And thence went the nearest way to vagliadolid with Martin Lornitz Elspinosa a Guide to the Colledge of Saint Albans; where hee continued as they vnderstood, vntil hee set out back for

Bilbao; he arrived here the 3. of November following; hee stayd in towne about 8. dayes and was shipd vpon the Marchant of Bilbao bound for Top-sam in England. Martin de Lornitz Espinosa a guide dwelling at Bilbao deposed vpon oath before a Notary that hee knew Titus Ambrosius as having conducted him on a Mule the right way from Bilbao to the Colledge of S. Alban in vagliadolid where they arrived on the beginning of June 1677. Moreover that hee is ascertained how the said Titus was never 5. leagues out of vagliadolid vntill he returned for Bilbao for having occasion to travel frequently that way (as being a Guide much employed because he knew the french Language) as often as he past he found him at vagliadolid. The fore-said depositions were taken on the secōd of Ianuarie 1679. stilo novo at Bilbao before Iohn Baptista de Asturiaca a publick notary: the originals are kept at S. Omers together with an Authentical Attestation that the said Iohn Baptista is the Kings publick Notary.

That he went not to Madrid from the time of his arrival at the Colledge of S. Albans in vagliadolid vntill his departure from the Colledge is made out by the depositions vpon oath of F. Manuel de Calatajud Rector and F. Domingo Rames Procurator of the said Colledge as followeth: Titus Ambrosius alias Oats departed from the Colledge of S. Albans in vagliadolid for Bilbao on saturday 30. October 1677. he entered vpon the 1st of Iune about 4. or 5. in the afternoon into the Colledge; from the time of his entrance till the day of his expulsion he never lay one night out of the Colledge which also appears, by the Books.

That he went not to Madrid from the Day of his departure from the said Colledge vntill his arrival at Bilbao vpon returne, is made out by the Depositions of Iohn de Sandoval the Guide who furnished him with a Mule and accompanied him from vagliadolid to Bilbao: as followeth.

On saturday the 30. October 1677. we departed from the Colledge of vagliadolid and lodged that night at Torquemada ten leagues of; the next morning I told him I would heare Masse hee said he would not heare. The next night we lodged at Burgos, and the morning after being the Feast of all saints wee both heard Masse at the Dominicans, then wee kept on our journey, and at noone arrived at a place cald the White Inne having broke fast in the morning; he inquired of the host whether hee might say Mass in the Chappel over the way, I asked him how hee could say mass having broke his fast in the morning. Hee answered that's no great matter, I have severall times said 3. or 4. Masses after breakfast. On the third of November about noone wee arrived at Bilbao.

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The said depositions were made before Joseph Morales at vagliadolid the Kings publick Notary on the 20. of December 1678. The Originals with all the usual Formalities in such cases are kept at S. Omers.

How after his arrival at Bilbao he never went out of the towne before he was shipt for England is attested by Mr. Michael Hore Marchant of Bilbao.

Titus Ambrosius alias Oates arrived here with the Castilian Guide, who returned homewards the next day.

Titus stayed here about 8. or 10. dayes during wch time hee never went from Bilbao but kept Company with the English in Towne vntil he was shipt for England, which was in the Katch call'd the *Bilbao Merchant Thomas Richard Master*, bound for Exon, to which place I vnderstood the vessell belongs. I hope this fully satisfies you that Oates was not at Madrid and therefore that he is perjured as to this point. Titus Oates being expell'd out of the Colledge of Vagliadolid with a very bad character which will shortly be published in a larger treatise, & departed out of spaine came to London in November 1677. And before the end of the same moneth prevailed with the Jesuits to bee sent over to S. Omers. He departed November 16. st. i: v: on a munday from London in a coach to Dover and arriv'd at S. Omers 10. of December st: no. Now he depos'd vpon Oath at the Kings bench Bar. *Colemans Triall* pag: 18. How he brought a packet of Letters From Mr. Coleman delivered to him by Fenwick at London, *with* (saith he) *I opened when I came to S. Omers.* And some few lines after being asked by the Chief Iustice. Did you break it open? Oates. *I was at the opening of it and saw it and read it.* But this is a peccadillio not worth an animadversion. What is material, is, that in the Packet there was a letter of thanks to Father Lechese for the 10000. pounds given for the propagation of the Catholick Religion and it should be employed for no other intent, but for that for which it was sent; which was to cut of the King of England. pag. 19. Oates saith, *I delivered this letter to Father Lechese his owne hand.* pag. 20. he spoke Latin to P. Lechese, which Lechese sends an Answer to this Letter. *I brought it to Saint Omers and there it was enclosed in a letter from the Society to Coleman.*

It is not worth an observation that Oates spoke latin; an Ignorant Dolt that could not speak six words nor write 3. lines of true latin; I must tell you the Character the spaniards gave of him: *wee have a mean opinion of the English Hereticks since so ignorant and ridiculous an animal could gain esteem amongst them.* This Letter mentioned in Col: Trial contained Treason of the highest degree. Oates received it at London from Fenwick, brought it to S. Omers where hee was present at the opening and reading; he delivered it to Lechese his owne hands

hands and brought back his Answer to S. Omers. so that Oates after his arrival at S. Omers must have gone to Paris to deliver the Letter, and then returned back to S. Omer. But from his arrival at S. Omers which was the tenth day of December st: n: til the 23. of June st: no: on which day he departed for good and all hee never lay out of S. Omers but one or two nights at Watten the Iesuits Noviship 2. leagues distant; this is deposed upon Oath by 20. Persons before the Eschevins of the place, and an Authentical Testimony is extant of it. Are you satisfied now that Oates is perjured in another material point relating to this pretended conspiracy? I come now to the maine body of the Plott. Colemans Trial pag. 21. Mr. Oates speaks: *In the moneth of April* st: n: *in the moneth of may no: st: there was a Consult held at London, it was begun at the white Horse Tavern, after they had consulted to send a Procurator to Rome they adjourn'd themselves to severall clubs and meetings. They went on to these Resolves, that Pickering and Groves should continue in attempting to assassinate the kings Person; Groves was to have 1500. l. Pickering 30000. Masses.*

Colemans Trial pag. 27. *In the moneth of may last new stile April old stile. I think within a day after our Consult I was at Mr. Langhorne's Chamber: He had severall Commissions which he call'd Patents; Amongst his Commissions I saw one from the General of the Society of Iesus by vertue of a brief from the Pope by which hee was enabled, for Coleman to be Secretary of State. Justice Wilde.*

What other Commissions were there in Mr. Langhorne's Chamber? Oates Agreeth many I cannot remember all there was a Commission for my Lord Arundel of Arder Th: Lord Powis and severall others. Lord chief-Iustice. Ibid. p. 28. When did you see the Commissions? Oates. In the moneth of April old stile May new stile. Lord chief Iustice: What time did you come over from S. Omers? Oates. In the moneth of April. Ibid. pag. 29. Oates speaks, Mr. Langhorne I hear you have received the Commissions from Rome; He said, hee had: shall I have the honour to see some of them; He said I might: hee thought hee might trust mee, and so hee might for that very day I gave him an account of the Consult.

Most of the said particulars are mentioned likewise in Oates his depositions taken by order of the house of Commons. As the severall Consults held at London in April and May at which he was present about assassinating the Kings Person The Commissions of Military and Civil Offices, as also for the Bishops, seen by him in Mr. Langhorne's Chamber These are the two main branches of the Plott: *Destroying the King Person and subverting the Government.* How absurde and ridiculous this Fable is to a man of indifferent Capacity I leave to your Consideratiō, I have not leasure to make glosses. I must tell you in one word Oates came to S. Omers on y 10. December stilo novo 1677. and stayed there untill

untill 23. June 78. Also novo all that Time hee never lay out of the Colledge but one or 2. nights at a place two leagues distāt, there is an Authentical instrument vpon that subject made by the Eschevins of the place, having examined 20. wittenesses vpon Oath for that Purpose There are a hundred more ready to testifie it in the same manner. How was Oates then at London present at the foresaid Consults, and saw the Cōmissions in a Chamber of the Inner Temple in April or May? Are you satisfied that hee is perjured? He swore that hee delivered a Cōmission to Sr. Francis Rarcliff in Wilde garden the summer 1678. where as it was made out that Sr. Francis had not been in London within four yeares. Hee swore that Pierson my Lord Powis his Secretary in the month of Iune 78. receiued a Cōmission for his Lord in Wilde street, and brought there in a Coach 300. l. in exchange for it, where as it can be proved by 500. wittenesses that Mr. Pierson was not in London nor within 80. miles of it from Aug: 9. 1677. vntil October the 5. 1678. Hee swore that one Preston a married man of many yeares was a Priest, and how hee had been several times at Confession with him: the Contrary was proved to his Face. My Lord Chancellor can Authenticate it. Hee swore before the Lords that hee could accuse no other member of their house nor any Person of Consideration out of their house; yet within few dayes after hee swore in the same place that the Queen was deeply engaged in the Plot, my Lord Salisbury will Iustifie it, who caused the Journal to be inspected, and asked the opiniō of the house whether the Queen was a Person of Consideration or no? I should alleadge his false accusations of Mr. Ireland for words and Actions done and spoke at London when it is deposed by many Honorable and worthy Persons that he was far distant from the place, which shall bee made out with euidence in a treatise a part. All the other particulars are canvassed and found false in the same degree so that Oats had great reason to say *Colemans Trial* 30. pag. *Prisoners may supplant Evidence when they know it and bring Persons to such circumstaunces as time and Place.* I hope you are fully satisfied that the Plott is a Diabolicall Fiction of this Oates: that himselfe is a pure compound of Lyes forgeries and Perjuries. I hear there is a statue preparing for him as preserver of the Kingdom. I shall adorne it withan Epigraphe for his sake.

Vpon this fellows Testimony is grounded the whole Machin of the Plott; others are brought in as buttresses to support a weak foundation. Vpon his single testimony the Lords and many Gentlemen of Quality and fortune besides Priests and diuers others are committed to Prison and some of them, most barbarously treated. Catholiks houses are searcht in all parts for arms and Priests; All Catholiks in lesse then seven dayes warning are banisht out of London

and Ten miles about. Others in the Country confined within five miles of their habitation; so many forced to take Oaths against their Conscience. The train bande vp in London, watch and ward thorough all the Kingdom. Many severe Bills prepared in Parliament against poor Papists. An vniuersal consternation in all places. And what is beyond all admiration both houses of Parliament vote that there is a plott.

Others I say are brought as Buttr-fles. In the first place comes in a second to Oates, a knight of the Post ready to sweare what you please, one Bedloe a Fidlers son. Its hard to give a Character of him in a short letter, he is well known over most part of England, Low countreyes France and Spaine for debaucheries cheats, Robberyes and Rogueries: Guzman and the english Rogue were meere novices to him; but it is no marvell for J am credibly informed by a Person of worth that hee carries a familiar devil about, which he calls his Patrimony, and if he were well searcht it might be found. Hee hath disgraced many honorable names in his Travells as Lord Cornwallis in France, and Lord Gerard (not him of Gerards Bromley) in Spaine, but all these are pardonable crimes. Hee cheated even his owne Friend Titus Oates alias Ambrosius in Vagliadolid, yet Oates has sworn that hee never saw Bedloe before: and brings it as a great proof of the truth that his Depositions should be confirmed by a meere stranger. I have in my Custody to attest it Titus his owne Letter dated at Vagliadolid September 3. 77. to M. Grace a Marchant. I am sorry for Mr. Franklin's misfortune by the pretended Lord Gerard, hee should
,, first have demanded of the said Lord three things, his Patent of honour,
,, his licence vnder the great seal of England to travel, and Letters of Credit
,, for his Reception. If the said person were my Lord Gerard, I assure you
,, that hee's an errant Rogue and is outlawed in England for a murder committed vpon a boy whose neck he broke Villanously & basely; Proclamations are out against him. His complice was tried for his life but was quitted,
,, the fault lying on the said Lord Gerard as the sole Murderer: I have written
,, against him to the Irish Archbishop and Father Sweetmans a Jesuit that
,, they may not countenance him, he stole ten peices of 8. out of my Drawer
,, being left alone in my Chamber, whilst J went to provide him somewhat
,, to eat and drink. This is Oates his owne Letter, I am not bound to correct
some mistake that lyes in it. Esquire Brandon Gerard is much obliged to Bedloe, and has exprest his Gratitude at a dead list. When his Majesty with great indignation had refused to signe Bedloes pardon extended to a certain day, who more concerned in the Case then the Esquire? who more importune to press him too it, then hee, and at last effected it? for your assurance that
this

this Bedloe was the counterfeit Gerard I send you a copy of a letter from Mr. Hore Marchant of Bilbao to a friend at Madrid. December 12. 1678. The Originall I have in my custody.

„ El Diabolico Titus (Oates) may bee proved a perjurer if hee swore that
„ hee was at Madrid I writ a couple of lines to a friend in London to whom
„ I sent the note Titus gave mee for the 10. pieces of 8. I lent him; and
„ by the way gave him to vnderstand that one Williams of whom his letter
„ to Mr. Grace makes mention, has presented himselfe Before the Parliament,
„ declaring himselfe to have had a hand in Sr. Edmunbury Godfreys death.
„ I know the said Williams to bee a knave and a highway Robber, and Titus
„ Oates told me that hee had stolen from him at Vagliadolid ten peices of 8.
„ This Williams was here with his brother, the one pretended himselfe to bee
„ the young Lord Gerard. and the other his Tutor, The one is a shoemaker
„ the other a Carpenter: they have vsed many cheats and other mad pranks
„ amongst our Marchants.

This fellow is quallified to bee a Witnesse in the case, hee hath obtained an vniversal pardon vnder the great seal; but noe act of Grace nor oblivion can cancell the memory of his misdemeanours. This man hath far more wit and confidence then Oates tho hee is only second and not principal in the Intrigue. He and Oates swore stoutly against Mr. Coleman, who took it vpo his salvatio before and after sentence and at the Gallows, that he had never seen Oates before hee was brought into trouble, nor Bedloe before the day of his Triall.

A third Person brought on the stage is one Prans a silver smith, who hath sworn forward and backward several times in the Case: hee is now for the Plot, but I presume when the next fit comes he will swear against it.

Stephen Dugdale born of mean Parents in Darbyshire after some ^{time} spent in schoole was applyed to the plow, but being found to have skill in Arithmeticke, and a capacity for a better employment, he was entertain'd by the Lord Ashb for bailey. After some years spent in that service honestly as is supposed, hee turned spendthrift by frequenting foot races, making matches abetting and loosing often such considerable somms as once of three hundred pound, that to maintaine his Credit he vsed to imbezel his Lords money and play several other cheats, things wel known and talked of in the neighbourhood before they were discovered by his Lord in October last, which was on this occasio. Hee had told his Lord that certain Tenants had not payed their Rent whereof one coming in the way was asked the Reason, who answered that it was payed long before; the Lord asked his Bailey: whether it were true, hee stooode vpon the denial very confidently, vntill the Tenant was brought in place. Then hee fell vpon his knees

knees begd his Lordships pardon promising future amendment if hee might keep his service, which was granted at the intercession of a Gentleman then in the house, provided hee would procure out of hand the money for which hee had sold two yoke of Oxen: this hee vndertook to doe and assured his Lord that within few dayes the buyer would bring it, but noe money Coming hee was asked who the buyer was; hee said one of Newcastle, and how a certain man of Stafford was wittnesse to the bargain. The Lord found vpon enquiry at Stafford how the price of his Oxen had bin disposed of to pay a debt of his Bailly. About the same time he sold of certain Runts unknown to his Lord, ad kept the money. For these and many other cheating tricks notoriously known in the familie and Countrey about Tixall, hee was turned out of service. Towards the end of November he was committed to the Jaile of Stafford, where hee took the Oaths, but being asked by two Iustices of Peace whether hee knew any thing of the Plot, hee answered that hee knew nothing. Yet on the 23. December, having had notice of 200. l. and other advātages that were promised to any one that would make further discovery of the Plot, being now in a desper ate condition and never like to get out of Prison by reason of his debts, layed hold on the proffer and feyned a false accusation. You see vpon what account he is brought in shortly wee expect to have his depōsitions published.

I hope this short account wil satisfie you that there is noe plot; I have made use of one Topick only to defeat ~~Others~~ his deposition, to wit, by making out that he and the Partyes accused were far asunder at such times as he fixes the Treason to, which he laid to their charge.

Your selfe will reflect vpon the Absurdities and Improbabilityes in the whole subject of his deposition. As that Oates was a Iesuit, a fellow unknown should be entrusted with secrets of most dangerous consequence, and then turn'd away disgracefully to betray them. To be cal'd by a particular Patent to consult, to bee empowered to open letters. That 40000. black Bills should be provided, and yet be in visible. That a Generall of a Religious Order should bee empowered to dispose of all Offices Military and Civil in the Kingdom by commissions. That such honourable Persons of Estates and discretio should bee so simple as to believe it, and stake both life and Fortune on such a mad cast, &c. All the whole Contrivance is a meer midsummer nights dreame.

But all this increases the difficulty of the second Quere, how the whole nation could be worked to such a temper as to belive it. This is soone answered if the time were seasonable: the successe of a plot doth not so much depend vpon the Composition as vpon the management. There lyes all the art and wit. *Verbum sapienti satis.* Adieu.

FINIS.



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